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Essays, Expositions, &c.

WAYMARKS FOR 1863.

"Set thee up waymarks."—JEREMIAH xxxi. 21.

To review the past, and to take careful note of the way along which we have travelled, is both a "waymark" of wisdom and a source of safety in what remains to be undergone before we reach the end of our journey. By such a retrospect we acquaint ourselves with the space we have already travelled,—the point we have reached,—and the probable distance of the "rest" towards which we are journeying. Dr. Gill says "the design of the [above] words is to put the Jews upon thoughts of returning to their own land, and so prepare for it. *Set thine heart towards the highway, even the way which thou wentest;* from Judea to Babylon, or into other countries; think of going the same way back again; for, as there was a highway from Judea, there is one to it; let thine heart be upon returning that way."

So in a spiritual sense the true Israel, the now scattered tribes of the "election," (Romans xi. 7, 28) "shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." (Isaiah xxxv. 10) But as they travel homewards and pass year after year along "the way of holiness," they should erect their "waymarks" to show how far they have travelled, and what yet remains to be endured before they cross the Jordan. At the close of the year 1863, this may be done with profit, if we are careful to set up the "waymarks" aright, and to indicate correctly our true position in the heavenly journey.

I.—*Where are we as travellers to Heaven, at the close of another year?*

Have we laid aside, or have we carried with us "the sin that doth so easily beset us?" Have we heeded, or have we neglected the exhortation, "So run that ye may obtain?" One who knew the journey

well, and with whom "bonds and imprisonments" were a daily portion, thus describes his own method of travelling to glory—"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, *I press towards the mark* for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Would not such a traveller—or say a racer—carry as little about with him as possible? Could he have *pressed towards the mark* with any unnecessary burden upon his back? Or could he have said with any propriety, "Brethren, be followers together of me," had he been an overloaded traveller and just ready to sink?

Our *knowledge* is a "waymark." Has this grown and increased during another year, or are we where we stood when it commenced? What is our knowledge of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit? What of the work of Grace in the heart,—of imputed righteousness,—of sanctification,—of deadness to the world and sin and the law, and of life towards Christ the living vine? What is our knowledge of our "calling and election?" (2 Peter 1, 10) Have we given diligence to make them "sure" beyond all doubt or misgiving? Is this "waymark" on the top of Pisgah,—or is it in the valley and among the shades? Do we see the promised land, and can we

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Or, loitering and sauntering on the way, are we still among the babes, sipping the milk of childhood and despising the "strong meat" of a more manly state and of more advanced travellers? Should this be so, then the "waymark" of the year may be seen in "the place of the breaking forth of children," (Hosea xiii. 13) among the unwise sons of guilty Ephraim, of whom the Most High testified that he was "like a silly dove without heart." (Chap. vii. 11)

Our *Faith* is a "waymark" to indicate our progress, and as a general rule, its strength or weakness will show how far we have proceeded on our heavenly journey. Like every other grace faith improves by practice and grows by exercise. The more it is employed and called into action, the more powerful it becomes for all the purposes of the Christian journey. And as a "waymark" to denote progress it should advance from year to year. To draw nearer to heaven and have no more faith is a contradiction; and to be subject to a whole year's discipline of trial, of danger, and of success, and possess no more confidence in God and Christ than when the year began, is to declare in effect that the ordinances, the discipline, and the grace of the whole year, have been as good as thrown away. Where then is this "waymark" at the close of the year? Is it with an unbelieving Thomas with whom sight and sense were everything, and faith nothing at all? Is it with the discontented thousands of Israel who asked murmuringly, "Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle with thirst?" Or when, on the evil report of the spies, they exclaimed, "Would to God we had died in this wilderness?" Is it bold with a Job to trust God "though he slay me,"—obedient with an Abraham to the sacrifice of a beloved Isaac,—or timid with a Peter, even to sinking, though the Lord of all be nigh? Where is this noble "waymark" of the pilgrim's progress? Is it

trembling with the babe,—growing with the young man,—or ripe in assurance with the Father in Christ? *Where*, on the journey, is the "waymark" of faith at the close of another year?

Our *Love* is a "waymark" on the road to heaven, and will do much to show what advancement another year has witnessed. Upon this grace depend attachment, obedience, and zeal. Love attaches the heart to Christ,—prompts to a ready and delighted obedience,—and produces a warm and steady zeal. As a "waymark" of progress it is very distinct and clear. Faith itself works by love, and purifies the heart of all *known* idolatry by placing a bleeding Saviour upon the throne. Then as a "waymark" it shows how far the world, and self, and sin are left behind; and how much nearer Christ and heaven are to the heart's best affections. Its place in the journey will be ascertained by asking, "What share of the heart has the Saviour had throughout the year? Have I loved his person, his works, his ordinances, his people, and his cause? Have I loved his habitation among men,—his house of prayer,—more than my own? Have I kept his commandments *because I have loved him?* Has my service been a service of love, or one of drudgery? And what has been my zeal for him? Have I been zealous for his honour in his doctrines, his ordinances, and his authority? What error, dishonourable to him, have I stedfastly opposed? What innovation upon his authority, have I perseveringly resisted? What poor sinner have I pointed to his dear Cross? And to what poor saint have I carried the "balm of his consolation?" Thus the "waymark" of love may be set up, and its true position correctly ascertained. Happy they with whom this "waymark" shows a year nearer heaven.

Our *Holiness* is a "waymark" of great significance upon the king's highway, for this being "the way of holiness; *the unclean shall not pass over it.*" (Isaiah xxxv. 8) This is not so much a grace, as it is a state or condition of character, and grace is given in order to produce it. Hence it has become a great gospel law that "sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans vi. 14) Consequently, the overthrow of the dominion of sin is the work of grace, or in other words the production of holiness is the object of reigning grace. For this purpose the saints are placed under grace, holiness being impossible while they are under the law, inasmuch as the dominion of law and the dominion of sin are inseparable in man's depraved condition. But as no man can be saved while under the dominion of sin, which is also the dominion of law, the saints of God are placed not under the law but under grace. And this grace reigns "through righteousness," or holiness, unto everlasting life. By this high privilege the saints "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Consequently, *holiness* becomes a distinguished "waymark" on the road to heaven, and its true position is determined by how much we are "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here, then, we may properly enquire how we have regarded sin during another year? Do we hate it with a perfect hatred? Do we flee from it as we would from a wild beast of prey, or a fiery flying serpent? Do we pray against it,—strive against it,—

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watch against it? Do we regard it as a mortal foe, and are we concerned, and determined to slay it at the foot of the Cross? Are we afflicted to sorrow and tears on account of it, and do our closets testify to our groaning and humiliation before God, because we find it still a rebel "law in our members?" Let it not be forgotten that we love holiness in the proportion that we hate sin, and no other; and just in this proportion is holiness a "waymark" to show how far we have travelled "the road that leadeth to life."

Having thus briefly indicated these "waymarks," a few practical observations remain to be made.

II.—*What lessons should this review of the "waymarks" of* 1863, *be considered to teach?*

In looking back upon these marks of progress, they should be allowed to teach us *deep and unfeigned humility*. Should we not be thoroughly humbled to think of our little progress in the way to heaven? Is there not deplorable defect in every grace of our character,—in our knowledge, our faith, our love, our holiness? Are we not more like "children, tossed to and fro," than flourishing saints "rooted and built up in him" whose sacred name we bear? Surely we should be humbled, deeply humbled, when we view our slow advances in all that tends to make the man "perfect in Christ Jesus!"

This review should also teach us *Gratitude*. For notwithstanding our indolence and guilt, our blessed Saviour has not ceased to bear with us throughout another year. There stands the fig-tree—barren to a proverb,—or only yielding signs that mock the name of life,—yet has the tender husbandman foreborne the fatal stroke, and laboured for its fruitfulness. Though the "waymarks" exist, too frequently, but to reproach us, yet He, the compassionate Shepherd, "gathers the lambs with his arm, and carries them in his bosom;" and instead of upbraiding us for our folly, He encourages us with the loving assurance that "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." Hard indeed will be our hearts if this tender compassion should fail to dissolve them in warm and lasting gratitude.

The survey of these "waymarks" should also teach us *faithful warning* against future indolence and sloth. We are solemnly warned by Sardis of old, that even the Saviour will "come as a thief" against such as have a *name* to live, but are dead. He, too, hates with a perfect hatred such as are "neither cold nor hot," and as He did with the Laodiceans, He will "vomit them out of his mouth." Let the review of the "waymarks" of 1863, operate as a warning against indifference, lest, as with the murmuring and disobedient Israelites in the wilderness, we "fall after the same example of unbelief."

And finally, the examination of the year's "waymarks" should teach us the indispensable importance of *perseverance* in our journey to our Father's home. We are forewarned that "he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;" and the Lord himself has assured us that "no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." But through divine grace, let the "waymarks" themselves prove, that "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." Beyond

the Jordan a noble host who once travelled the road and set up their "waymarks," are beckoning our onward progress, and as we listen to their songs of victory, one voice, tender and sweet above all others, is heard addressing each wayworn pilgrim, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

A. P.

CHRIST ALL, AND IN ALL.

Leaves from my Note Book.

By a Yorkshire Preacher.

(No. 21.)

"Christ is all, and in all."—Colossians iii. 11.

This short sentence is a complete miniature body of divinity. What is there in divinity that is not implied in it? What more could even an apostle have said of Jesus? Say more he could not: say less he would not. So there he exhorts the Lord's people—"Lie not one to another: seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Where—or 'In whom'—there is neither Greek nor Jew; circumcision nor uncircumcision; bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all."

To speak of an individual as being "all and in all" in a certain scheme or action, is to say that that scheme or action is entirely his own, and that the contrivance or performance essentially belongs to him. So when Christ is said to be "all, and in all," in whatever light we may view him, in such respect He stands alone, and all the glory of what He is, contrives, or performs, belongs to him and to none else. If we look upon Jesus as the eternal God, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, having all the perfections and attributes of Deity, we see him to be "all, and in all." He is the essential cause of all things that exist. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Without his sustaining power, the universe itself would soon crumble and decay, and Nature's laws be lost in chaos. Every breath we draw, every beat of the pulse, every movement of the heart, is in obedience to his command. As He creates and sustains, so He fills all things. As the Omniscient and Omnipotent, his glance penetrates alike through darkness and light, into places the most public, and places the most obscure. From his presence none can flee. He knows every thought, hearkens to every word, and notes every action.

But more particularly doth the apostle in speaking of Christ as "all, and in all," allude to his mediatorial character. The name Christ, as applied to the Son of God, pre-supposes his humanity and official work. It sets him forth as the anointed of God—anointed to be the prophet, priest, and king of his people. Christ then, as the anointed mediator, is "all, and in all."

As mediator, He "is all, and in all," in God's eternal purposes. Whatever God designed to do before the universe was framed, He designed to do through Christ. Thus, in Ephesians, we read that God created all things by Christ, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God: according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Did God then design to create, He purposed to do so through Christ. Did He design to make man, it was because of Christ. Did He design to save man from the ruins of the fall, it was through Christ. All Jehovah's plans centre in him, and promote his glory. "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever: Amen." He "is all, and in all," in the election. Was the church chosen, it was "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." There is no election to salvation out of Christ. To Christ, the elect were given by the Father. He became their Head, and they became the members of his mystical body. He engaged to be their substitute, and to bear all their sins away in his own body on the tree. Thus the Father looked at them through him and in him, and declared himself to be well pleased. He "is all, and in all," in salvation, for "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." By his life and death, Jesus fulfilled the law, satisfied the claims of justice, washed away sin, and wrought out such a complete salvation, that the sinner finds every need supplied, every want met, and everything accomplished to secure his welfare below and his happiness above. His own arm alone brought salvation. When there was none to help He engaged alone in the mighty conflict, and in it He sweat great drops of blood on the cross, and over his head the tempest raged in wrath. Satanic hosts gathered around and mocked his sufferings. Men passed by and wagged their heads and cried, "Ha, ha! He saved others—himself He cannot save." But He bore all, and exclaiming "It is finished," meekly bowed his head, and died.

Oh, the wonders of this salvation. Ruined sinner, it will suit thee. Let his salvation alone be thy boast. All other refuges are false, but the salvation of Christ is firm, solid, and everlasting. He "is all, and in all," in the sanctification of his people. His blood purges from guilt. Washed in it the sinner is made whiter than snow. Applied to the conscience by the Holy Ghost it purges from dead works "to serve the living and true God." Without we are thus set apart, through this cleansing fountain, to serve the Lord and live for him, we shall live and die in sin. He "is all, and in all," in the manifold graces bestowed upon his people. From him they receive their every supply. To him they go for life, for strength, for love, for faith, for every grace, for all spiritual and for all temporal supplies. Upon him they wait, in him they hope, and to him they look. His presence cheers them, his arm protects them, and his promises support them. On him, as the "Bread of Life," they live. No other food will suit. "His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed." To be brought to his banquetting-house and have the banner of love unfurled over their heads, is their highest enjoyment. Then they "sit under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to their

taste." Oh, to receive more and more of his blessed gifts that we may constantly exclaim, "All my springs are in Thee." He "is all, and in all," in the ordinances of his appointment. They are his, and therefore should always be kept and honoured. When believers are immersed, when they are seated at the Lord's table, they feel that these sweet ordinances set forth the sufferings and death of Jesus; that they point to his atoning work; and knowing that when they keep him in memory, He is remembering them, looking down upon them in love, and granting them his heavenly blessing, they often have a foretaste of the time when they shall sit down with him at his own table, at the celebration of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

He "is all, and in all," in the Word of God. Every page, either directly or indirectly, sets him forth. Take Christ out of the Bible, and the Bible would be as valueless as the Koran of Mohammed, or the Shastras of the Hindoos. But in all its history, in all its prophecies, in all its songs of praise, in its evangelical records, and in all the epistles, Jesus is extolled and proclaimed as "all, and in all." The Word of God is Christ's deep, exhaustless mine. Search it then, reader, to find Jesus. The deeper thou dost dig, the more golden ore shalt thou obtain. The golden promises and revelations often lie beneath the surface. If thou dost "seek them as silver, and search for them as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." He "is all, and in all," in the true Ministry of the Word. All God's servants delight to honour him, to set him forth in every text, to make him the substance of every sermon. Their sweetest times are those seasons when the heart is full of him. Oh, that Christ were preached as "all, and in all," in every pulpit in the land. The people will never tire of the subject. The preaching of the cross is always new. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord," was the testimony of the great apostle; and those who would be gospel preachers and reap great success, must preach a great Christ to great sinners. He "is all, and in all," in the worship of his people. They have no desire to worship anything or any one but Jesus. They worship him in their prayers, as did the Syrophenician woman when she fell down at his feet and worshipped him, saying, "Lord, help me." They worship him in their lives, for they dedicate them to his service. They worship him with their tongues, for they sound aloud his praise. And in heaven their songs of Jesus shall be as the sound "of many waters." Thus He "is all, and in all," in the eternal glorification of his people. His presence in heaven will be their chief glory, and to him they shall be indebted for the union of soul and body, that both may partake of a glorious immortality.

Sinner, is Christ thy "all, and in all?" Is He to thee "the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely?" Dost thou love to dwell upon his name and sacrifice? Is it thy constant delight to serve him? It is written "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed." He ought to be. He sets up other Gods: his fate therefore is just.

Hail! lovely Jesus, thy beauty is marvellous, thy work glorious, thy grace boundless. Once thou didst wear the crown of thorns—now

thou dost wear the crown of glory; once thine hand held the reed—now it holds the universal sceptre; once thou wert clothed in mortality—now thou art clothed in immortality; once thou wert mocked, scourged, and crucified—now thou art seated on the throne, worshipped by all heaven. All things set thee forth and praise thee. Thou art the Sun of Righteousness, the bright and morning Star, the good Shepherd, the ever-living Advocate, the Rock of Ages, the Pearl of great price, the true and living Vine, the Door of the sheep, the Captain of our Salvation, the Lamb of God, the Physician of our souls, our Advocate on high, and our never-failing Sanctuary. When our race on earth is run, when the body shall lie upon the bed of death, when weeping relatives and friends shall stand around, and with choking sighs and sobs take the last farewell, then in that dread moment send the angels to take us to thyself; and then, free from all sorrows, and beyond all pain, where ransomed hosts above ascribe all honour, and glory, and dominion, and power to thy all-glorious and worthy name, we, too, will raise our feeble voices in the united chorus, and sing "Christ is all, and in all!"

SAINTS PRESENTED FAULTLESS.

"Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."—JUDE 24–5.

THIS wonderful and glorious event, which shall be consequent on your being kept from falling, is full of consolation. You will then appear "without spot and blameless," not only in the eyes of redeemed fellow-sinners, but in the presence of the King of Glory. This faultlessness comprises both your conduct now, as the sons of God, and your conformity to Christ at his coming and his kingdom. You will then appear to have been delivered, even in this world, from the common sins of hypocrites and unbelievers. Such were Noah, Job, and Daniel. The like character is given of all the redeemed. "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." And there is nothing in the failings and imperfections of the true Israel of God to weaken this description. Jewels are jewels, and gold is gold, and all true believers are the gems of God. When they turn to the right hand, and when they turn to the left, they hear a voice behind them saying, "This is the way—walk ye therein." The Lord restores and heals them—and hence they still walk in the paths of righteousness. Their prevailing aim and endeavour is to please God and walk in his law. In that day you must, if you are Christ's, be found faultless as to love unfeigned, true brotherly kindness, imitation of Christ, and bold confession of him before men. If love to God and to all men, not excepting enemies, has been the grand and guiding motive of your hearts through life, you will be counted faultless, though much sin has cleaved to you, for "in many things," saith an apostle, "we all offend"—

and hence you daily need to pray "Forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

If you have indeed desired and honestly endeavoured to live as Christ did; feeling it your duty and your happiness to be followers of him, and not of man, in all things, far less of the ungodly,—you will be approved. And if you have confessed him as the Son of God and only Saviour, who redeemed you by his blood, and saved you by his grace, He will surely confess you in the presence of his Father and the holy angels. With respect to your conduct even here He will count you blameless. What saith the Scriptures? "Thou do no iniquity." "He who is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Again, we shall be presented altogether faultless and perfect in his presence. How wonderful is this! How supremely blessed! But the honour and the happiness of a state of positive perfection are more than we can now comprehend. We indeed learn much from scripture, yet is there still something on the subject of actual perfection, too high and glorious for our comprehension. Our first parents were formed after the image of God; they had intimate and joyful fellowship with God; they were not afraid of him as after the fall. To the sinful and the guilty no object is so terrible and painful as God; to the faultless and obedient none so glorious and lovely. Our Lord and Saviour was perfect. We see this in his actions and his life—though we cannot see it as we ought, in the tranquility and happiness, the purity, benevolence, and elevation of his soul; or in his fellowship with the Father, and his delight to do the will of God. Presented in his presence we also shall attain not merely to the perfection of his human nature upon earth, but to the higher perfection of it in the glory of the resurrection. "We shall see him as he is, and be like him."

Again, we see perfection in the holy angels. Those glorious spirits style themselves the servants of God. They delight to do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word. They are the willing and the happy instruments of serving Jesus in his kingdom, and all sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. Being thus faultless they stand in the presence of God. We shall hereafter be like those immaculate and loving messengers of God—standing with them in the presence of Him who sitteth on the Throne and of the Lamb—we shall participate in their felicity and in their adoration and their praise of the God of salvation.

Our joy then will rise above our highest happiness on earth—it will be "exceeding joy;" for we shall then be in the presence of his glory. Often have the saints rejoiced on earth and felt more blessed than they could express. Their joy was then "unspeakable and full of glory." Such happiness is not always felt on earth: some taste it, but seldom in a high degree. But at the coming of the Lord there shall be no sorrow, no crying, no pain; no infirmity of nature; no fear; no trial from without will ever mar your joy. Even on earth how great would be our happiness if no sin within, no outward evil troubled us. Yet on earth there is far less to make us happy than before the face of God. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

Our greatest joy then will arise from being actually in his presence, and beholding him, as the God of love, in glory and in majesty. The highest measure of happiness ever known on earth arose from a near view of God, in the courts of his holiness. (Psalm lxiii) There one day was better than a thousand. Nay, seeing Christ afar off, made the heart of Abraham glad; and his birth made Simeon and other saints exceeding glad. On the other hand, nothing so much grieved the disciples as when Jesus was taken away from them. But He rose again on the third day, as He had told them, and then were they glad when they saw the Lord: their sorrow was turned into joy, and that joy none could take from them. It was fellowship with him made the countenance of Stephen shine as the countenance of an angel. And who can conceive the holy triumph of his soul when he saw "the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Glasgow. A. M.

(To be continued in the next.)

Fragment.

Examine Yourselves. — 1. Remember that salvation is one of Christ's dainties which he giveth but to a few. 2. That it is violent sweating and striving that taketh Heaven. 3. That it cost Christ's blood to purchase that house to sinners, and to set mankind down as the King's free-tenants and free-holders. 4. That many make a start towards Heaven, who fall on their back, and win [attain] not up to the top of the mount. It plucketh heart and legs from them, and they sit down and give it over, because the Devil setteth a sweet-smelled flower to their nose, this fair busked [decked] world, wherewith they are bewitched, and so forget to refuse or go forward. 5. Remember that many go far on, and reform many things, and can find tears, as Esau did; and suffer hunger for truths, as Judas did; and wish and desire the end of the righteous, as Balaam did; and profess fair, and fight for the Lord, as Saul did; and desire the saints of God to pray for them, as Pharaoh and Simon Magus did; and prophesy and speak of Christ, as Caiaphas did; and walk softly and mourn for fear of Judgments, as Ahab did; and put away gross sins and idolatry, as Jehu did; and hear the word of God gladly, and reform their life in many things according to the word, as Herod did; and say, "Master," to Christ, "I will follow thee whither thou goest," as the man who offered to be Christ's servant, (Matt. viii. 19); and may taste of the virtues of the life to come, and be partaker of the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, and taste of the good word of God, as the apostates, who sin against the Holy Ghost, (Heb. vi.): and yet, all these are but like gold in clink and colour, and are watered [plaited with silver] brass and base metal. These are written, that we should try ourselves, and not rest till we be a step nearer Christ than sunburned and withering professors can come.—*Rutherford.*

Page for the Young.

COMPETITORS FOR THE PRIZE.

The Editor is happy to acknowledge eleven communications in competition for the prize offered in the *Primitive Church Magazine* for October last. He has carefully examined the whole of them, and considers the passages sent in by William Rudd, of Woolwich, as quite the best on the question of the world's conversion to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And it is proper to state that this youth is the youngest of all who have competed, being but ten years and a half old.

The letters sent give the following results in reference to the passages of Scripture selected by the youthful writers.

	Right.	Doubtful.
William Rudd	10	0
J. A. H. B.	9	1
Joseph B.	8	2
James R.	8	2
Mary M.	7	3
Sarah J.	7	3
Martha M.	6	4
Richard C.	6	4
Betsey H.	5	5
Jane C.	5	5
Sarah A. H.	4	6

Although but one was really entitled to the prize, according to the terms of the announcement, yet the Editor was so much pleased with the proofs of diligence and care on the part of all his young correspondents, that he considered each to be deserving of some token of approval. While sending the promised History to William Rudd, he has also sent each of the other competitors a useful book as an acknowledgment of their merit. These, he hopes, will encourage them to make another effort whenever a similar offer is made, which may be in a short time.

In the January number of the Magazine there will be a letter to his young friends on the subject of the conversion of the world to Christ the Lord, and he intends to interweave the principal passages sent up by his youthful correspondents, in that address on the certainty of this world's subjection to the great Redeemer. He hopes that his young friends in all parts will carefully read that letter when it appears.

A WORD TO PARENTS.

The most common of all human complaints is parents groaning under the vices of their children.—*R. Cecil.*

No greater harm is done to Christendom than by the neglect of children; therefore, to advance the cause of Christ, we must begin with them.—*Martin Luther.*

I think I may say, that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education.—*Locke.*

The most important thing in this world, next to the soul's salvation, is the taking care of children; and yet there is no subject on which there is so much ignorance as on this.—*H. W. Beecher.*

I have long felt that until the fathers and mothers are better men and better women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that that could be brought to bear on the *mothers* more especially would effect a greater amount of good than anything that has yet been done.—*Earl of Shaftesbury.*

Correspondence.

BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Having been requested by the Committee of the above-named Society to fill the office of Secretary, I have acceded to their wishes, and am now anxious to bring its claims under the special notice of the Pastors and Deacons of our Churches.

This Society was formed in 1841, its object being to make known the Gospel and to advocate scriptural views of the Ordinance of Baptism, by the publication of Tracts, Handbills, and suitable Books for Children. Of these, nearly three millions have been printed.

Great good has been effected by their circulation in different parts of the world, as proved by the testimonies received and published.

During the last few years, the income of the Society has been much reduced by the death of some of its friends and by other unforeseen events, so that the Committee (unless other friends come to their help) will be compelled to refuse applications for grants much needed in dark and destitute localities.

In order to carry on the operations of the Society in proportion to the rate of the last three years, its permanent income must be increased at least £30 per annum, and to meet this necessity, contributions are earnestly requested.

The labour of all the Officers is gratuitous, and the entire income is expended in the circulation of the Truth.

I would suggest that where there are two or three Baptist Churches near each other, and unable to make collections for this object, arrangements be at once made for a united public meeting at the most convenient Chapel. On receiving a communication from the Pastor or Deacons, I will render all possible aid, and in company with Mr. Oliver the Treasurer, or some member of the Committee, attend such Meeting and advocate the claims of the Society: no expense will fall on the Churches. I would also embrace the opportunity at such meetings to direct attention to the *scriptural plan* of *giving*, which has been so successfully adopted in many places, and which would materially increase their finances, supply funds for every Christian object, and make the support of the Ministry easy and pleasant.

If the Members of our Churches will co-operate in active measures to spread a knowledge of the Redeemer's kingdom, little differences will soon be forgotten, Christian love promoted, and God will be glorified.

I remain, your fellow-labourer in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ,

J. E. Cracknell,

Hon. Sec. to the Baptist Tract Society.

Address—"Lee, Blackheath, Kent."

Nov. 12, 1863.

Poetry.

ONE YEAR NEARER HEAVEN.

WRITTEN FOR THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

Nearer my Saviour,—nearer Thee,
By yearly mercies given;
By all thy grace, so rich, so free,
Yes,—one year nearer heaven.

Nearer by ev'ry dark'ning cloud,
Across my pathway driv'n;
Arise my heart, and sing aloud,
Yes,—one year nearer heaven.

Nearer, by all the pain and fear,
With which the heart has striv'n;
Nearer the goal by one more year,
Yes,—one year nearer heaven.

Nearer by ev'ry sin denied,
And earth's rejected leaven;
Nearer to Him the Crucified,
Yes,—one year nearer heaven.

The rolling months their sorrows bring,
And care the heart has riven;
But come ye saints of God,—and sing,
"We're one year nearer heaven."

Manchester. WILLIAM STOKES.

Reviews.

HISTORY OF BAPTISTS, AND THEIR PRINCIPLES, CENTURY BY CENTURY TO THE PRESENT TIME. By WILLIAM STOKES. The Author, No. 71, Robert Street, C.-on-M. Manchester. 184 pages.

In a neat and unpretending volume, Mr. Stokes has presented the Christian world in general, and the Baptist denomination in particular, with a "History of Baptists." As that history, as far as it is known, is scattered up and down in ponderous folios, in learned works beyond the reach of the masses, in public documents laid up in the archives of literary societies, and in private papers and church books, the property respectively of private individuals and isolated congregations, the esteemed author of this book has occupied his spare time—and without doubt time that could ill be spared—in ransacking all manner of authorities, in order to furnish us with a reliable history, "century by century." That he has succeeded in his laudable design cannot be doubted. As Mr. Stokes, however, in his preface, assures us that "The limited space at the author's disposal has obliged him to compress his history into the smallest possible compass," and modestly "entertains the hope that his little volume will be of service to the younger members of the denomination," we can only express our hope that he will, if practicable, at some future time re-write the book, and make it double or treble its present size.

With this hope we refer to the History itself, and without hesitation affirm that the author has done his work well. Commencing with the important question "The baptism of John, whence was it—from heaven or of men?" the author proceeds, century by century, to trace the history of the "sect everywhere spoken against," showing what they were, and proclaiming what they did. Quotations are given extensively from Robinson, Mosheim, Neander, Milton, Calvin, Gill, Thomas, and a host of authors, ancient and modern. For the adoption of any disputed historical account, Mr. Stokes generally gives his reasons, and with those reasons disputants must be prepared to deal. The whole is ably written, and there is no pompous display of learning. On the "Communion question," the writer is decided, fearlessly denouncing the idea of any compromise. As may be expected, what is called "Infant Baptism," receives from him no quarter, as the following extract, taken from Century Fifth, page 41, will testify:—

"This now popular ceremonial of Infant Baptism acquired its present character gradually, the elements of which it was formed having appeared in a slow succession. It was first an apostolical tradition, then the accepted successor of Judaism, and finally a political expedient. The first gave it a show of Divine authority, the second surrounded it with an air of plausibility, and the third converted it into a national and ecclesiastical necessity. By the first it assumed to be of the New Testament, by the second of the Old, and by the third, the climax and perfection of state policy. It conciliated all parties, the Jews and the Gentiles, the Priest and the Emperor, the Church and the State. It was the most perfect engine ever devised for exalting the priest and controlling the nation: it has proved the stronghold of Popery in every age, and the chief support of every *established* church upon earth. Consequently it is not surprising that it should have become the most popular institution in the modern Christian world. But its days are numbered, notwithstanding its present prosperous condition. 'The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,' will, sooner or later, lay it level with the dust."

Here is a battering ram, powerful enough we should think to make all our Pædobaptist friends stagger, and equally powerful to shiver their idol to pieces. If they desire to see these serious charges proved, we would advise them to spend the small sum of two shillings in the purchase of the book; predicting, that in their search for proof, they will not be disappointed. We had marked other powerful extracts, but space forbids. The author has proved that for Thirteen Centuries immersion alone was the acknowledged law of the church—that "sprinkling" was the exception; and that the innovation was never practised without protest on the part of the faithful. He has proved that in the "dark ages," under the diversified names of Paulicians, Paterines, Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathari, or Petrobrussians, there were found hundreds of thousands of noble men and women, "of whom the world was not worthy," who not only denounced infant baptism as a human invention; but were prepared to be excommunicated, imprisoned, mutilated, drowned, beheaded, broiled, roasted, or to suffer death in any other horrible shape, rather than give up their Christian principles, or neglect to obey their Saviour's commandments. He has proved that the last martyr in England was a Baptist, and that in every age our illustrious predecessors have ever been foremost in defending the rights of conscience, and maintaining to the best of their ability the principles of civil and religious liberty. He has proved, that with Christ as a Leader, the Bible as the Rule of Faith, and the "noble

army of martyrs" as pioneers; no Baptist need be ashamed of his tenets, his example, or his lineage. He has proved all this, and much more: and because he has done so, we commend the work to the careful perusal of all who are interested in the history of the Baptist denomination.

G. W.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL. By W. GREENHILL, M.A., of Stepney, in 1650. Revised, &c. by James Sherman, late of Surrey Chapel. Edinburgh: James Nichols. London: James Nisbet & Co. 859 pages.

Valuable as have been the issues of Mr. Nichols, no volume published by his enterprise and zeal, has exceeded the present one, either in deep theological doctrine, or profound insight into the mysteries of the truth of God. Greenhill was no common man. He thought for himself, and by dint of an earnest independence and devotion, he became one of the most celebrated preachers of his day. While afternoon lecturer at Stepney he was popularly known as the "Evening Star," his friend Mr. Burroughs, who took the morning service, being called "the Morning Star." These two "stars" shone with great brilliance, and though it is long since they disappeared below the horizon, they continue even yet to reflect a radiance from their works that none but those of the first magnitude can ever produce.

For more than two hundred years "Greenhill on Ezekiel" has been regarded as a standard work, and since our own time a copy could scarcely be obtained at a very high price. It is now supplied in this handsome and clearly printed volume at a price that brings it within the reach of all who have relish for sound divinity. We had noted several passages for quotation, some of them of extraordinary force and sweetness; but to our deep regret space forbids their appearance. But have we a single pastor among us who will not exert himself to possess a copy? Or a church, on whose library shelves a copy shall not be found? We earnestly hope not. The following is the only passage for which we can find room:—

"Chapter xliv. 5.—Here God requires the inward and outward parts, the heart and senses. These words, 'mark well,' are, in the Hebrew, set thine heart; so that the heart, the ears, and eyes, are to be attentive, and intentive, on what God commands. The heart must not wander, the ear be heavy, nor the eye rove, when God speaks, and temple work is in hand. The holy God, and holy things, are exactly to be observed and heeded by all; but especially by those who are officers in his house, as Ezekiel was: they must attend to all the ordinances and laws of God's house, for they must make them known to others, and walk by them themselves: they must know how to behave themselves in the house of God, and teach others so to do: especially, they must 'mark well the entering in of the house,' that is, they must be careful who they admit to be in it, and to partake of the ordinances of it, lest both it and they be defiled; they must mark every going forth of the sanctuary, so that none go out at the same door they entered, that they go forwards, not backwards, that they leave not the house of God, but be looked after."—Page 801.

We commend the above to such as are indifferent as to "*the entering in of the house*" of God. It is of small moment that we may be called "bigots" and "narrow-minded" for our faithfulness and care; but better this and much more, than pollute the house of God by unlawful admissions.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF R. SIBBES, D.D. Vol. VI. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet & Co. Dublin: W. Robertson. 560 pages.

This volume contains some of the richest, though the least known, of the pieces written by Dr. Sibbes. When we inform our readers that they are eighteen in number from "The Faithful Covenanter," and "The Saint's Comforts," to "The Bride's Longing," they will readily perceive the nature of the treat which the volume supplies. It is redolent with the fragrance of "the rose of Sharon," and runs over with the rich wine from the grapes of Eshcol.

The piece on "Lydia's Conversion" is, in several of its statements such as might be expected from a Pædobaptist. The good Doctor flounders about in the shallow waters of baptismal regeneration—for to this his remarks on infant baptism plainly tend—but fails to touch the real point in question. He forgot that Lydia was from the distant city of Thyatira in Asia, and was travelling on business as "a seller of purple;" and even supposing she were a mother, (which is nowhere stated) it is impossible to prove that her children travelled with her. "And if she had young children," says Dr. Gill, "it is not likely she should bring them with her to such a distant place, whither she was come on trade and business," it being from Thyatira to Philippi a distance of nearly or quite three hundred miles. But good Dr. Sibbes will have them there, though never mentioned by the evangelist, because necessary to a system whose chief support is a far-fetched inference.

There is, however, so much that is really excellent, in this volume, and to which no Christian of any sect can take the slightest exception, that we hail with pleasure this addition to the noble series of Puritan Divines.

BRIEF NOTICES.

Hart's Hymns. W. H. Collingridge, London. This is a most useful edition of these well-known hymns, and admirably adapted to public worship.

The Four Gospels. By the American Bible Union. Thirteenth thousand. The most *literal* translation of the Gospel yet published, and one that most faithfully represents the original. The word "baptize" is invariably rendered "immerse," as in Matt. xxviii. 19, "Go, therefore, and disciple all the nations, immersing them," &c. and John i. 25, 26, 28, 31, &c. In Matt. iii. 1, it reads, "In those days came John the Immerser," &c. The beatitudes in Matt. v. are rendered "Happy the poor in spirit," "Happy they that mourn," "Happy the meek," &c. Many English readers will continue to prefer the rich old word, "Blessed," and in some other instances they will regard the change with regret.

Shropshire Circular Letter, by Mr. Jenkins, of Madeley, is an excellent production, and should be widely circulated.

Old Jonathan looks as well as ever, and bids fair to reach a good, healthy old age.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Should Sunday Schools ever usurp the authority or duty of Parents, they will then prove a great evil. It is the solemn duty of parents to teach and superintend their own children; and it is a far more beautiful sight to see parents with their children in their own pew, than to see a number of children in a gallery and under the care of strangers.—*A modern Author.*

Intelligence.

LONDON.

SOHO CHAPEL, OXFORD STREET. The Fifth Anniversary of Mr. Pell's pastorate was held on Tuesday, November 3rd, 1863. Although a very uncomfortable evening, the chapel was well filled.

Mr. Pells took the chair at half-past six o'clock, and after singing, reading, and prayer by Mr. Webster, the Chairman expressed his pleasure at seeing so many ministerial brethren and others present, and said, "Christian friends, another year has passed away since thus we met together, and, like its predecessors, it has been characterised by changes both in the family and in the church. It has been a year of trials and affliction. I was taken ill in January, and continued so in February, and did not fully recover until April. During my illness, Brethren Wyard, Bloomfield, Higham, Whorlow, and Peet kindly supplied my pulpit. I have baptized two persons during the year who were called by the grace of God, under the ministry of our brother Peet, one at St. Albans, the other in this place. We have received 20 into our fellowship, 13 by baptism, and 7 by letter and experience. We have withdrawn from 12, chiefly for non-attendance; dismissed 8 to other churches of the same faith and order, and lost 6 by death: 198 persons have been received into our communion during my five years' pastorate, and our present number of members is 311. Through mercy I am happy with the people, and the people with me; and the deacons and myself have been in harmony from the beginning, for we never take any step in church matters without first consulting each other."

Mr. Belina, one of the deacons, then arose and offered a few appropriate remarks, corroborating what his pastor had just said.

Brethren Milner, Wyard, Foreman, Bloomfield, and Higham delivered excellent addresses on truly important subjects. Brethren G. and W. Webb, Edgecombe, Rayment, and Dowdall also took part in the service of the evening.

The doxology having been sung, the Pastor pronounced the benediction.

At the close of the meeting a collection was made at the doors on behalf of the Strict Communion Baptist Society, amounting to £4. 1s.

THE ROYAL STANDARD TAKEN DOWN.

Will our readers believe it? Will they believe that even in Windsor itself the Royal Standard has been drawn down and surrendered to an enemy? It is so, and the following account details some of the sad particulars. After a full description of the proceedings at the settlement of Mr. Grey as pastor of the Baptist Church in that town, we are told in conclusion that—

"The assembly were also informed that the church would no longer exclude from communion other members of the Christian church who would not concur with them in their views on the subject of 'believer's baptism,' but, while maintaining as a church their own sentiments, they drop merely the narrow exclusiveness which would forbid other Christians partaking with them the 'feast of the Saviour's love,' on the ground of a difference of opinion on a non-essential point."

But is it "non-essential" to obey the King of Heaven? We read his law thus, "Ye are my friends if ye do *whatsoever* I command you."

But they read otherwise at Windsor, and we regret it deeply. Alas, that the Royal Standard of the Great King is so ignominiously surrendered to a carnal expediency! Alas, when a *known* command of Christ the Lord is publicly proclaimed to be a "non-essential!" "What next? and next?"

A MODEL BAPTIST MINISTER.

NEW ZEALAND. — The correspondent of the *Weekly Review*, after describing the sore disappointments of many who left their native land, to found a Nonconformist colony in that distant part of the world, goes on to say,—

"Others are scattered about, and some are suffering from want. Their newspaper, *The Albertland Gazette*, was to have made its appearance this month; but some part of the press being missing, it was found impossible to print it. Mr. Brame seems to have given great dissatisfaction, and though dead, his doings are yet spoken of. Mr. Edgar, the minister among this body, is, according to report, well adapted to the place and people. He does not stick at trifles, nor employ himself in splitting straws, for he will either immerse adults or sprinkle infants as may be required. The Church is called a Christian Church, and denominationalism is strongly denounced."

A wonderful minister this! "All things to all men," with a vengeance. But is this "the faith once delivered unto the saints?" Would a Peter or a Paul have performed such a part in the name of the Lord Jesus? Yet, this is a modern Baptist, and one, if we mistake not, who was trained at Stepney Academy, and duly accredited as a Baptist minister! Alas, consistency! whither hast thou fled?

BAPTISMS.

CLOUGHFOLD, ROSSENDALE.—October 29th, Mr. C. H. Anson, the pastor, baptized seven, in the presence of a large assembly. Brethren Nichols, of Sunnyside, and W. J. Stuart, of Haslingden, assisted in the service.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE. — Mr. William Stokes, of Manchester, baptized one in September, and five on November 1st. The discourse on the latter occasion was founded on John xv. 14, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." These, with others received by letter, &c. were introduced to the Church by the right hand of fellowship at the Lord's Table, one being an aged sister of near eighty-five years, who was for a long period a member of the church under that man of God, John Stevens, at Meard's Court Chapel, London.

MANCHESTER: WILMOT STREET.—On Lord's-day, September 6th, our pastor baptized a young man who has been in our Sabbath-school from early youth, after a discourse from Mark viii. 38. Also, on the 25th of October, four young females were baptized, after a discourse from Matthew iii. 13, 16, and on the following Lord's-day were (with one restored member) received into the fellowship of the church. The attendance was very good.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

BY THE REV. T. DAWSON.

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